

CRIME PREVENTION STANDARDS

A Guide for Virginia Law Enforcement Agencies

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FOREWORD

The need to address crime is as old as civilization itself. And, while we have always struggled with whether to punish or rehabilitate criminal activity, there has never been any question that the best alternative to "illegal" behavior is prevention.

Yet, while history is filled with examples of "punishments" for given crimes, the evolution of prevention is not as easily defined. Perhaps that is due, in some part, to the militaristic viewpoint that tends to prevail in history. Or, maybe it is because prevention is not considered as exciting as investigation, arrest, and sanction.

In any case, prevention as a basis for policing was first formulated in England with the passage of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. Prevention was the ultimate goal of the organized police force and the prevention philosophy translated into practice. Thus, English law enforcement officials chose not to arm themselves. Armament was viewed as a reaction to crime, not a way to prevent it.

Over the ensuing years, however, the prevention tradition established by Robert Peel in England was overshadowed by a growing emphasis on investigation, arrest, and punishment. This was likely due to the growing impact of criminal activity. For example, the White Rabbit Gang which operated in New York in the early part of the twentieth century, was largely responsible for the decision of the New York Police to arm themselves. The gang's activities and increasing influence meant officers had to spend greater amounts of time responding to crime instead of preventing it. This established a cycle in which criminal activity would evolve to a higher level, then law enforcement would have to respond with increasingly punitive strategies which moved farther and farther away from the prevention tradition.

It wasn't until the early 1970's that prevention again assumed importance in police efforts. The growing burglary rate in the United States forced the National Sheriffs' Association to develop a national Neighborhood Watch program. Since the inception of Neighborhood Watch two decades ago, the burglary rate has dropped consistently. Today it is about half of what it was twenty years ago.

The success of such programs fueled renewed interest in prevention strategies. In recent years, community policing and problem-oriented policing, both of which are grounded in prevention, have grown rapidly, both in the United States and in other western countries. This trend toward prevention-based policing underscores the need to establish standards by which local law enforcement agencies can gauge their crime prevention efforts.

INTRODUCTION

As we look toward the next century, there are a number of reasons why the Virginia Crime Prevention Association has undertaken the arduous task of developing crime prevention standards for law enforcement agencies. Foremost among them is the need to sculpt a crime prevention delivery system, within every police and sheriff's department, that is responsive to the need for public safety and security.

According to Code of Virginia, 15.1-138, Powers of the Police Force,

"each policeman shall endeavor to prevent the commission within the county, city, and town of offenses against laws of the Commonwealth and against the ordinances and regulations of the county, city, and town; shall observe and enforce such laws, ordinances, and regulations; shall detect and arrest offenders against the same; shall preserve the good order of the county, city, and town; and shall secure the inhabitants therein from violence and their property from injury."

Until the early 1970's, law enforcement was content to fulfill its prevention obligations through mobile patrols deployed in order to answer service needs of the public and to deter criminal behavior. However, a series of national research projects in Kansas City and elsewhere clearly revealed police patrols had little effect on the occurrence of crime. In addition, both law enforcement and citizens began to arrive at the conclusion that crime control was not the exclusive province of a police force and that it was necessary for law enforcement and the community to work together to combat crime. Consequently, law enforcement began to explore other opportunities for preventing crime.

It was during this period that law enforcement agencies began to form dedicated crime prevention units to educate the public on the threat of crime and ways it could be prevented in homes, businesses, and the community. Neighborhood Watch, Operation Identification, and Home and Business Security Surveys were just a few of the crime prevention strategies that had their beginnings during this period. Most of Virginia's law enforcement agencies provide some level of crime prevention services to the public. However, it is surprising how few have a formalized function comprised of trained personnel who identify high crime areas provide a mechanism for citizens in those areas to become involved in community anti-crime projects.

The need for these standards is also apparent given the community and problem-oriented policing movements which broaden line officers' responsibilities to include crime prevention. In addition, many experts believe the potential exists within a crime prevention unit to reduce the opportunity for crime by working with the community and other government agencies is largely untapped because some law enforcement executives do not recognize the potential for actually preventing crime. Finally, the Crime Prevention Association and the diverse committee that developed these standards believe that the crime prevention unit must undertake the role of facilitating and coordinating an agency's crime prevention mission rather than being expected to provide all the direct services to the public. This philosophy is based in reality and rests on the following premises:

Premises

There is growing recognition that, in order to be truly effective, we must return to Robert Peel's first directive that "the principal object to be attained is prevention."

In order for a criminal act to take place, three factors must be in place: opportunity, ability, and desire. A community crime prevention program should address all three factors.

While law enforcement agencies have a major role in the prevention of crime, they cannot effectively do the job alone.

Community members must be willing to participate actively in prevention strategies.

Crime prevention must be based on a thorough and accurate analysis of demographic, crime, and related data.

To be most effective, the analysis should drive the development of a comprehensive plan, not just isolated prevention activities.

The plan should address all constituent groups within the community, especially those groups and/or neighborhoods at risk to criminal activity.

Because the community climate changes, crime prevention plans must adapt to the changing environment.

1. Organization

Overview

When the English Parliament passed the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829, its first order was that "it should be understood, at the outset, that the principal object to be attained is the prevention of crime. To this great end every effort of the police is to be directed."

1.1 The delivery of crime prevention services is the responsibility of all personnel within the law enforcement agency.

Commentary: When the modern crime prevention movement began in the late sixties, many law enforcement agencies adopted the model that called for a dedicated crime prevention unit to assume virtually full responsibility for delivering crime prevention services. With the advent of community and problem-oriented policing, a philosophy has emerged within law enforcement that suggests that crime prevention, like other services previously thought to be the exclusive purview of dedicated units, is truly the responsibility of all personnel within the agency.

1.2 Every law enforcement agency should establish crime prevention goals, objectives and evaluation measures.

Commentary: Goals and objectives enable a department to focus limited resources on specific problems and direct its actions toward those strategies which will have the greatest impact. Since the basic mission of law enforcement agencies is to protect the public's safety, then crime prevention goals and objectives should constitute a significant priority.

1.3 Every law enforcement agency should have a formalized crime prevention unit staffed with an appropriate number of full or part-time personnel.

Commentary: Even though the delivery of crime prevention services is the responsibility of all personnel within the agency, there is, nevertheless, a need to have a formalized unit which directs, manages, and coordinates crime prevention activities, and serves as a resource for the agency's crime prevention effort.

1.4 The crime prevention unit should be placed strategically within the agency's chain of command.

Commentary: To effectively coordinate the agency's crime prevention services, the crime prevention unit should have equal access to both operational and administrative units and divisions. Moreover, as an integral part of the chief executive's staff, it must keep the command staff apprised of community problems and recommended strategies.

1.5 The crime prevention unit should facilitate and coordinate the law enforcement agency's crime prevention mission.

Commentary: While the agency's mission remains constant, the strategies chosen to address the mission change over time to meet specific needs of the community. It is the duty of the crime prevention unit to ensure that, as strategies evolve, they remain in keeping with the agencies crime prevention mission. In this regard, the primary role of the crime prevention unit within the agency is to coordinate and facilitate all crime prevention service and provide direct services to the public where the need is commensurate with skills which exist within the unit.

1.6 Every police agency should initiate a crime prevention planning process which focuses on the identification of historical and emerging crime problems and the development of community-wide strategies to address them.

Commentary: The control of crime is the responsibility of the entire community. Law enforcement should work in partnership with the community to plan and implement prevention strategies. To this end, law enforcement and the community must engage the community in a planning process which enables those affected by crime to articulate their perceptions of problems and solutions.

The planning process should be formalized and include members of the law enforcement agency, relevant government agencies, and selected representatives of the affected community. The crime prevention planning process may be initiated on a jurisdiction-wide basis or for a specific neighborhood which has been identified to be at risk to crime.

1.7 Crime prevention staff should work closely with the agency's planning unit, crime analysis unit, and the locality's community planning department to ensure that the prevention of crime is a primary planning goal.

Commentary: The delivery of crime prevention services should be tailored to specific crime prevention concerns of the community. One of the primary roles of the crime prevention unit is to represent the interests of the community in the agency's planning process. The unit should be one of the major users of data from crime analysis and should assist crime analysis by identifying at-risk neighborhoods and locations. Crime prevention personnel should also review demographic data furnished by the locality's planning department and should work with the planning department to review site and construction plans in order to enhance environmental safety and security.

2. Administration

Overview

The work of crime prevention personnel is crucial to the law enforcement agency's success in involving its officers, other government agencies, and the community in anti-crime efforts. This is a critically important aspect of policing.

Assuming the chief of police or sheriff is committed to having other agencies and the community involved in efforts to prevent crime, and believes that crime prevention and control are the responsibility of various interests within the community (not just law enforcement), the assignment of personnel to the crime prevention unit should be considered one of the most important decisions of the law enforcement executive. Consequently, the crime prevention unit must be staffed at a level that reflects its significance to the mission of the agency.

2.1 Every law enforcement agency should designate one employee as supervisor of the crime prevention unit.

Commentary: As part of the management team, the crime prevention supervisor should participate in staff meetings with the chief law enforcement executive and his staff. The primary responsibility of the supervisor should be to identify crime prevention program needs within the community and to report on efforts to involve the agency, other government agencies, and the community in ongoing efforts to prevent crime. The supervisor should also provide expertise on prevention-oriented community policing goals, objectives, and implementation activities.

The extent to which the crime prevention supervisor is responsible for the command of other functions within the agency depends, to a large extent, on the size and structure of the agency, and its crime prevention mission. The supervisor should hold weekly staff meetings with crime prevention staff to discuss needs, issues, planning, and progress.

2.2 The supervisor should be responsible for directing all aspects of the crime prevention unit and should represent the interests of the unit to the chief executive officer and his command staff.

Commentary: In many law enforcement agencies, the line personnel within the crime prevention unit have considerably more tenure than the supervisor. In some cases the supervisor relies on line personnel to dictate the direction of the unit. Notwithstanding the tenure of the line officers, the supervisor should provide leadership and direction while in charge of the unit. To this end, the supervisor should stay abreast of state and national crime prevention programs and trends.

2.3 Job descriptions for crime prevention personnel should be prepared and fully understood by those assigned to crime prevention.

Commentary: It is important that personnel know what is expected of them when they are assigned to the position. It is also important that the chief executive officer and others in the agency understand the duties and responsibilities of the crime prevention personnel.

Each job descriptions should establish the class of the position, pay range, required qualifications, responsibilities and duties.

2.4 Crime prevention personnel should possess effective planning and communication skills and should be capable of motivating and directing others.

Commentary: While sworn and civilian personnel each bring a different perspective to the crime prevention unit, it is imperative that all personnel be able to plan and communicate effectively. Skills should include, but not be limited to: effective writing, the ability to make oral presentations, program development, technical assistance, program evaluation, training, and planning and coordination.

2.5 Law enforcement agencies should give consideration to qualified civilians as well as sworn officers when filling vacancies within the crime prevention unit.

Commentary: Depending on the crime prevention needs of the department, it may be expedient to hire civilians to serve in a crime prevention capacity. There are two distinct advantages to this policy. First, it may be possible to hire an individual who already possesses specific skills that may be immediately needed. Second, civilians enhance continuity as their tenure in the unit may be longer than that of sworn officers who are more often subject to transfer.

2.6 Crime prevention personnel should be provided appropriate training in methods to reduce or remove the opportunity for crime.

Commentary: Upon assignment to crime prevention, personnel should attend a basic crime prevention course. Thus this will introduce both the theory and practice of crime prevention with respect to understanding the need and mechanics of developing a systems approach to crime prevention and control, community involvement, crime prevention strategies, planning, and physical and environmental security.

2.7 Crime prevention personnel should attend advanced or specialized courses designed to strengthen their crime prevention skills in physical security, CPTED, management, and coalition building.

Commentary: Because so much of problem-oriented and community policing is grounded in the crime prevention philosophy, and because technology evolves so quickly, it is necessary for crime prevention personnel to keep abreast of state of the art crime prevention theories and practices. Additionally, they must be able to implement theory through goals and objectives of the agency.

2.8 Crime prevention should be a line item in the law enforcement budget.

Commentary: The crime prevention unit is an important and distinct aspect of policing and should be funded for personnel, training, educational material, audio visual equipment, reference material, professional development, and membership in professional organizations. These funds should be specifically designated for crime prevention so they can be managed and evaluated as to their cost effectiveness.

2.9 Every law enforcement agency should consider using a cadre of volunteers to assist in the delivery of crime prevention services.

Commentary: The prevention of crime is crucially important to the mission of law enforcement. Personnel assigned to crime prevention should be looked upon as a valuable resource to the department and the community. Their time should not be diverted by public relations activities not related specifically to crime control. Therefore, it is recommended that agencies develop and manage a program that recruits and trains volunteers to undertake such tasks.

Volunteers have proven to be a valuable resource to law enforcement agencies that use them. This is especially true in the area of crime prevention. Volunteers can be used for a variety of tasks, including, conducting tours of the department, coordination of the ride-along program, collecting data for community profiles, providing

crime data to community groups, conducting bicycle safety clinics, making selected presentations to youth groups, staffing crime prevention displays, and distributing public awareness materials.

2.10 Every law enforcement agency should prepare comprehensive crime prevention policies and procedures.

Commentary: Law enforcement agencies institutionalize their most important functions through the use of written policies and procedures. The crime prevention policies and procedures should provide the basis for educating new recruits about their crime prevention roles and responsibilities. They should also describe, in detail, the specific crime prevention mission, as well as the crime prevention roles and responsibilities, of all other applicable units and divisions within the agency.

3. Operations

Overview

During the past three decades, citizens, police, and government leaders have come to realize that the control of crime, drugs, and associated problems is beyond the capability of law enforcement alone. Hence, it is necessary to marshal the resources of the whole community to address these problems.

Today, the relationship between law enforcement and the community is returning to what it was in the very earliest days of policing. Thus, the role of law enforcement is to assist the community in achieving its own goals relative to crime and disorder. Although law enforcement professionals continue to fulfill enforcement and order maintenance roles, they are also renewing efforts to work with the community to plan and implement comprehensive strategies to prevent crime.

3.1 The crime prevention unit should serve as the central point of contact for requests for crime prevention services within the agency.

Commentary: Traditionally, the crime prevention unit has been responsible for the delivery of nearly all crime prevention-related services within the agency. However, it is widely recognized that a small, dedicated unit cannot provide sufficient direct services to have the desired impact on crime. In many departments, patrol officers and other personnel are being asked to deliver crime prevention services appropriate to their assignments, duties and responsibilities.

To ensure coordination and accountability, all requests for crime prevention services should be coordinated by the crime prevention unit. In addition, policies should be established which detail the mechanics of working through the chain of command to ensure that requests for presentations and other services are delivered promptly and effectively.

3.2 The crime prevention unit should develop and distribute materials that increase the public's awareness of crime and ways to prevent it.

Commentary: Public awareness materials serve several purposes. First, they increase the community's awareness of crime and specific criminal activity. Also, such materials provide suggestions/activities to reduce or remove the opportunity for crime. Finally, public awareness materials can be used to build a community crime prevention presence or to forge consensus among groups or interests as to how to approach a particular crime problem. The crime prevention unit should develop, or otherwise obtain, public awareness material and work with others in the agency, government, and community to disseminate it.

3.3 The crime prevention unit should serve as a central repository of crime prevention reference material and program resources for those engaged in the delivery of crime prevention services.

Commentary: The crime prevention unit should serve as a clearinghouse for publications, periodicals, studies, research publications, newsletters, and other material related to the prevention of crime. The clearinghouse should also contain relevant program resources such as films, video tapes, slide programs, and displays. These materials should be made available, on a loan basis, to appropriate individuals, agencies, and organizations.

3.4 The delivery of crime prevention services should be based on an accurate analysis of crime and related demographic data.

Commentary: Individuals engaged in the delivery of crime prevention services are fond of proclaiming that crime prevention is proactive and that enforcement, to a large extent, is reactive. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Crime prevention, at least the way it is delivered within the community, can also be reactive. From a service delivery perspective, it is only proactive if personnel within the unit understand the extent and nature of crime in the community, or within a specific neighborhood, and then work with various entities to reduce the opportunity for it. To do this, crime prevention personnel must first know what the crime problems are as well as when, where, how, why, and to whom they occur. Without this information, it is virtually impossible to develop prevention strategies that address specific community crime problems. If crime prevention is to be proactive in a way that results in the reduction of crime and related problems in the community, it must be based on the analysis of crime and other data.

3.5 The crime prevention unit should maintain detailed records of crime prevention services requested and delivered.

Commentary: At best, the impact of prevention is difficult to measure. One way to evaluate such initiatives is through accurate analysis of service delivery. Additionally, once services have been delivered, it is easier to measure any changes which take place afterward. Thus, it is imperative that accurate records be kept on the delivery of crime prevention services.

3.6 The crime prevention staff should monitor and evaluate the agency's crime prevention activities and make periodic reports to the chief executive officer.

Commentary: Only those activities which prove to be effective should be ongoing. Ultimately, it is the chief executive officer who determines whether or not such activities should continue. Thus, it is necessary to provide accurate, timely program information for evaluation purposes.

3.7 The crime prevention unit should maintain contact with state and national crime prevention organizations and agencies and share pertinent information with other personnel.

Commentary: State and national prevention agencies and organizations act as repositories for materials and programs. They also serve as liaisons with crime prevention functions in other localities and other states. Thus, it is necessary to maintain contact with these organizations and share their resources with others involved in prevention activities.

3.8 The personnel within the crime prevention unit should assist the agency's planning unit and chief executive officer in developing the agency's crime prevention policies and procedures.

Commentary: Crime prevention personnel should have the expertise to assist with the preparation of the agency's crime prevention policy and procedures. The policy should be comprehensive in that it defines the duties and responsibilities of the crime prevention unit as well as other units and divisions within the agency. The primary emphasis of the policy should be the delivery of services to the community,

3.9 The crime prevention unit should use neighborhood profiles to assist in the delivery of crime prevention and law enforcement services.

Commentary: The crime prevention staff should help identify areas of the jurisdiction found to be at risk to crime, drugs, and/or disorder. They should then develop profiles of these areas using community demographics, service calls, crime reports, and arrest data. Where necessary, they should combine the statistical analysis with a

physical and environmental assessment of the area. Upon collecting the information, crime prevention personnel should prepare a report and provide it to appropriate users for implementation.

3.10 The crime prevention unit should be responsible for initiating and staffing Crime Prevention Planning Committees on a jurisdiction-wide basis and, when needed, on a neighborhood basis.

Commentary: Those areas within a jurisdiction which are found to be at risk to crime, drugs, and/or disorder will benefit from the establishment of crime prevention planning committees. Each committee should be comprised of representatives of the law enforcement agency, appropriate government agencies, and individuals within the affected community. By working through a planning process members should be able to identify specific crime and related issues, design strategies to address the problems, develop an implementation plan, and then implement strategies. Data analysis and a physical and environmental security assessment of the neighborhood can provide the basis for this process.

3.11 The crime prevention unit should work with other government agencies and community organizations to conduct physical and environmental security assessments of neighborhoods at risk to crime and related problems. The assessments should culminate in a plan to reduce the opportunity for crime.

Commentary: At-risk neighborhoods often experience a multitude of problems, crime is just one. In order to achieve the greatest impact, agencies and groups should work together, pooling resources when necessary, to address the entire range of safety needs. Crime prevention personnel should identify at-risk businesses, schools, and neighborhoods and recommend an assessment to specifically identify problems by type, location, time, and other factors. Personnel should be available to assist with the assessment and to provide the mechanics to accomplish it.

3.12 The crime prevention unit should provide training and technical assistance to other government agencies, businesses, and community organizations to enable them to plan and implement crime prevention service delivery systems for their constituents.

Commentary: One of the primary challenges for the crime prevention unit is to create the interest and capability within various entities in the community to enable them to provide crime prevention services to their constituents. To this end, crime prevention personnel should help these groups develop an implementation plan and then provide the necessary support and assistance to implement employee watch, personal safety training and other crime prevention programs.

3.13 Priority should be given to targeted crime prevention services in areas of the community most at-risk to crime.

Commentary: Law enforcement agency resources are finite. Those resources should be directed to the areas of greatest need; consequently, crime prevention services should focus first on high risk areas where crime prevention activities have the greatest impact.

The challenge to the staff is to assist others in providing for their own safety and security through Neighborhood Watch programs and other anti-crime strategies. With respect to security inspection services, the policies of the agency should dictate that, when requested, patrol officers conduct routine security inspections of homes and businesses on their beats.

3.14 The crime prevention unit should target specific populations for crime prevention services when they are found to be at-risk to crime and related problems.

Commentary: Although agencies may be expected to respond to requests for presentations and other routine services from the public, the crime prevention unit should plan and deliver appropriate services to populations that are vulnerable to crime as revealed by data collection and analysis. These groups may include the elderly, youth, females, the disabled, and others.

3.15 All law enforcement personnel should report appropriate security-related hazards and activities likely to generate crime and disorder.

Commentary: Patrol officers and others who work regularly in a particular neighborhood or area are often the first to notice potential crime-related problems such as inadequate lighting, unsecured buildings and property, trees and shrubs which impede visibility, graffiti, abandoned property, trash, and gathering places for young adults. A formalized reporting procedure should be instituted to facilitate this process.

3.16 Crime prevention personnel should prepare crime prevention lesson plans and make them available to others in the agency who are required to make community presentations.

Commentary: It is unreasonable to expect patrol officers and others in the department to prepare lesson plans for crime prevention presentations. Therefore, it is necessary that crime prevention personnel prepare standardized lesson plans on relevant crime prevention topics. Each lesson plan should be accompanied by handout materials and other information the officer should know. For example, lesson plans on child safety should include information on the McGruff House program. The lesson plans should be as comprehensive as possible.

When called upon to make a presentation, the officer should be able to readily obtain the lesson plan and all relevant material. Personnel in the crime prevention unit should constantly monitor this process to determine if the materials are being used properly, if they are relevant, and if sufficient materials are available.

3.17 The crime prevention unit should assist in training patrol officers and others within the agency to enable them to provide crime prevention services to the public.

Commentary: Many crime prevention techniques and initiatives require specific training. As law enforcement agencies seek to expand the role of patrol officers, it is likely that they will be required to provide a full range of public safety services (including crime prevention) to a particular neighborhood or community. In order to ensure that all community groups are receiving consistent, accurate information, the crime prevention staff must accept the responsibility for seeing that all other appropriate individuals are trained in techniques such as making crime prevention presentations, conducting security inspections of homes and businesses, meeting with groups to discuss community problems and issues, and assisting groups in establishing Neighborhood Watch programs.

3.18 When requested, patrol officers and other members of the agency should make crime prevention presentations to community and business groups, schools, and government agencies to make them more aware of crime and ways to prevent it.

Commentary: Law enforcement has been, and will remain, the focal point and source of information for crime prevention activities. Hence, other organizations will continue to depend on law enforcement personnel for crime prevention direction, coordination, and training. While the crime prevention staff should coordinate such efforts, the actual delivery of crime prevention information can be accomplished by a range of personnel within the agency.

3.19 Working with the community planning department, the crime prevention staff should review site and building plans for major development projects in the locality.

Commentary: It is readily acknowledged by many crime prevention experts that one of the most effective ways to remove or reduce the opportunity for crime is to design the built environment so that it allows for surveillance, access control, movement control, territoriality, limits unassigned spaces, and avoids design conflicts. To ensure that these principles are major considerations in the design of new construction projects and major renovation of existing sites and facilities, personnel within the crime prevention unit should assist the community planning department by reviewing appropriate site and building plans.

3.20 Crime prevention personnel should work with the school district to conduct safety and security assessments of all elementary, middle, and secondary schools within the community.

Commentary: Our schools should be considered "safe havens" for children. Unfortunately, communities throughout the Commonwealth and across the nation have witnessed a sharp increase in school-related violence. It is the responsibility of law enforcement to assist school personnel in assessing the security of the facilities. Such assessments should include physical and environmental security, security management, and a review of policies and procedures. Each assessment should culminate in a written report of recommendations.

3.21 Crime prevention personnel should coordinate efforts within the community to organize and maintain Neighborhood Watch groups.

Commentary: Neighborhood Watch has proven to be one of the most effective means by which citizens, in concert with law enforcement, can collectively reduce the opportunity for crime. While it is anticipated that citizens will take ownership of their watch programs, the law enforcement agency must provide the leadership and ongoing direction for such programs.

It is anticipated that others within the agency, with the help of prepared lesson plans, will be able to explain to groups how to organize a watch program. However, it is necessary that the crime prevention staff assists groups in actually forming the program and providing support once they are organized.

3.22 Crime prevention personnel should conduct complex security assessments of government agencies and businesses where specific security skills are required.

Commentary: Given the mission of the agency to prevent or reduce the opportunity for crime, patrol officers and other personnel in the law enforcement agency should be expected to learn the basics of crime prevention. Whenever more specific skills are needed (to conduct complex security assessments, for example) it is the responsibility of the crime prevention unit to carry out those duties.

3.23 Patrol officers and investigators should provide crime victims with information and advice that is intended to prevent future victimization.

Commentary: The criminal justice community has a responsibility to assist victims in avoiding future victimization through education, referral, or other assistance as needed. Patrol officers and investigators can provide valuable information to victims to assist them through the criminal justice process. More important, when investigating the crime, officers can provide tips and information to the victim, which may prevent future victimization.

